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U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

Employees' handbook.

Railroad Retirement Board

[Washington]

[1945]

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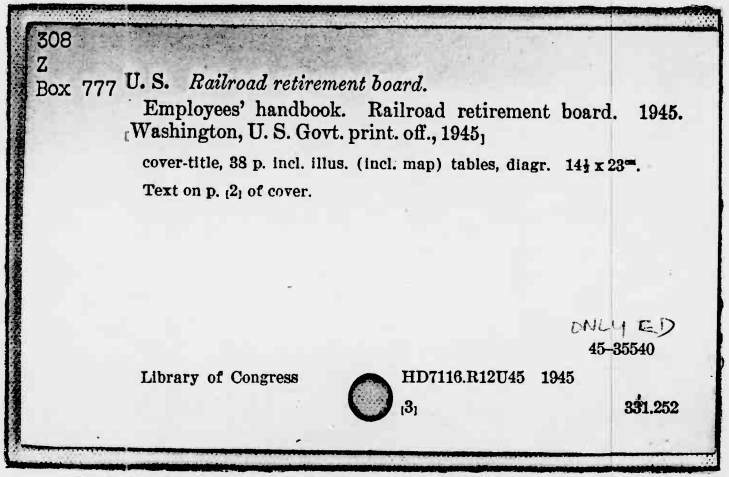

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employees' handbook

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD · 1945

to our employees in the field

American diplomatic representatives stationed in foreign capitals themselves constitute the Government of the United States in miniature, even though some of the customs they follow and conditions under which they work are a far cry from those known to their colleagues in Washington. Similarly, you . . . in California, Georgia, New York, or wherever you may be . . . are the Railroad Retirement Board of your community, just as your office, plus all the other field offices, plus headquarters, is the Railroad Retirement Board of the United States. The intangible bonds between you and your fellow Board employees the country over should be firm and close.

It is the Board's hope that this little book will tend to foster a feeling of kinship between field and departmental employees, and that the net result of your perusal of the book will be a deepening of the knowledge that, no matter how the superficial aspects of our jobs may differ from city to city or State to State, we're all crewing on the very same train, headed for the same objectives.

to all employees

This handbook tries to introduce the Board to you; to tell you what it is and what it does. It tells you a little about the rules, a little about your privileges; and something about the activities, organized and otherwise, of those who work here.

It's just an introduction; we hope you'll like the little you'll read in it and decide that you want more. We're not old; but we've done a great deal in our field, and there's a small library to be read if you want to find out more about us. If you'd like to learn more about the field of activity in which the Board operates, or about the Federal Government, you will find it profitable to ask the librarian to help you in choosing material to read and study. We want to encourage you to learn all you can, because that will be of help to all of us.

Murray S. Latimer

F. C. Squire

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table of contents

PART 1. Your Workaday World

Page

Remember your civics? 4
What goes on? 5
Benefits under the Railroad Retirement Acts 5
Benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act . 6
Employment service 7
Where are you? 7
The railroad front 7
Map: Field office facilities 8

PART 2. Strictly Personal

Your appointment 9
Your classification 9
Your efficiency rating 10
Your raises and promotions 10
Your retirement 12
Salary chart 13
Your hours 14

Your privileges:

Page

Leave—
Sick leave 14
Annual leave 15
Military leave 16
Court leave 16
Employees' compensation 17
Grievance adjustments 17
Group hospitalization 18
Credit union 18
Employee unions 18
Labor-management committee 19

Your restrictions:
No politics 20
No gifts or contributions 21
No gambling 21
No breach of confidence 21
No welshing on debts 22

Special services:
The health room 22
The library 22

Page

Special services—Continued.
- The bulletin boards . . . 23
- The employee counsellor . . . 23
- The recreational association . . . 23
- American Legion . . . 24
- Lunches . . . 24
- Women's lounge . . . 24

War work:
- War bonds . . . 24
- Red Cross blood bank . . . 25
- First-aid classes . . . 25

Miscellany:
- Manners . . . 25
- Milestones in your life . . . 26
- Conservation . . . 26
- Lost and found . . . 26
- Notaries public . . . 26
- Passes . . . 26
- Personal mail and phone calls . . . 27

PART 3. Strictly Business

Functions reserved to Board members . . . 28
Duties of the secretary . . . 28
Duties of the librarian . . . 29
Actuarial advisory committee . . . 29

Page

The general counsel . . . 29
The general auditor . . . 30
The Washington representative . . . 30
Director of research . . . 30
The executive officer . . . 31
Office of liaison activities . . . 31
Office of administrative planning and analysis . . . 31
The appeals council . . . 31
Office of director of finance . . . 32
Office of director of personnel . . . 32
Office of supply and service . . . 32
Bureau of wage and service records . . . 32
Bureau of retirement claims . . . 33
Bureau of employment and claims . . . 33

PART 4. Where Do You Go From Here?

Transcripts of Board Orders . . . 36
Administrative Orders . . . 36
Copies of the Acts . . . 37
Questions and Answers on the Railroad Retirement Act . . . 37
Monthly Review . . . 37
Annual Report . . . 38
Your Retirement System . . . 38
Political Activity and Political Assessments . . . 38
Accessions List . . . 38

part 1 · your workaday world

remember your civics?

Remember learning, when you were in school, that the Government of the United States consists of three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial? As you recited them back to the teacher perhaps you had a fleeting mental vision of the White House, or George Washington, or the current president, as you spoke the word "executive" . . . of the Speaker of the House declaiming "The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana" when you came to "legislative" . . . of nine black-robed judges sitting stiffly on a bare wooden structure curiously dignified by the title "supreme court bench" to cover the "judicial" aspects. Whatever your specific reactions, the whole thing probably seemed as remote as that item you picked up in your Latin class, to wit: "All Gaul is divided into three parts."

But now the feeling of remoteness is gone. You have become a part of the working organization that is the Government of these United States. As an employee of the Railroad Retirement Board, you are a part of the executive branch of the Government. The Railroad Retirement Board is what is known as an independent establishment in the executive branch of the Government. In other words, it is not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce or the Department of Labor or any other department headed by a cabinet member. It has its own particular job to do and it does it independently under the direction of a three-man Board.

The members of the Board are appointed, each for a 5-year term, by the President of the United States. One member, who is designated as chairman, represents the interest of the public at large in the functioning of the Board. Another is appointed by the President upon recommendations of the representatives of the railroad employees.

The third is appointed upon the recommendations of representatives of carriers by railroad.

what goes on?

benefits under the railroad retirement acts

You are probably familiar with some of the work of the Social Security Board. You know that people who work in certain types of jobs (most types of jobs, as a matter of fact) for a certain number of years, and pay a

percentage of their salaries into the Social Security fund, become entitled to retire and draw Social Security benefits in their declining years. The Railroad Retirement Acts provide for similar benefits, but their provisions apply only to employees of railroads, sleeping car and express companies, railroad associations, and railroad labor organizations and certain other closely allied organizations. (For the sake of convenience we'll call them all "railroad workers" in this booklet.)

The Social Security Act became a law on August 14, 1935. But back in 1934 Congress passed the original Railroad Retirement Act, providing retirement benefits for railroad workers. That act was declared unconstitutional and was replaced, on August 29, 1935, with another act. That 1935 act was amended on June 24, 1937, by the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937, and it is under the provisions of these two that we now pay retirement benefits to railroad workers.

There are several types of benefits paid under the Railroad Retirement Acts. Appropriations for these benefits come out of the Federal Treasury. But the appropriations for benefits and for the administration of the retirement acts have been, in the past, just equal to the taxes paid by railroad employees and their employers. The principal types are annuities paid to railroad workers who retire because of old age or disability. Survivors of railroad workers may also draw annuity benefits, under certain conditions, or they may receive lump-sum payments following the death of an employee or annuitant.

You can find out more details about the benefits paid by consulting the sources of information discussed in part 4 of this booklet.

benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act

Until less than 10 years ago, workers in the United States tided themselves over periods of unemployment by using their savings. If they had nothing laid by, or when savings were exhausted, they had to rely on relief, public or private. During the 1930's, many millions of workers were unemployed and receiving direct relief or were engaged in relief work, most of which was paid for by the Federal Government. In the 3 years, 1933, 1934, and 1935, the Federal Government spent about $6 billion on relief and relief works, exclusive of such specialized types as aid to the blind, children, and the aged.

In 1934 the President appointed a committee on economic security to study the problems of unemployment and insecurity and recommend methods by which some of the existing insecurity might, in the future, be prevented. In its recommendations, most of which were embodied in the Social Security Act of 1935, the committee recommended that a system of unemployment insurance be created which would provide, for a limited period, benefits to unemployed workers so as to avoid, during that period, either relief or use of savings. The committee recommended in general that each State establish an unemployment insurance system. For the railroad industry, however, the committee recommended a separate national system. While the original Social Security Act and most of the State unemployment insurance systems did not initially exclude railroad workers, a separate railroad system was created by Congress in 1938, with contributions and benefits beginning on July 1, 1939. On that date all railroad workers ceased to be covered by State systems.

Under the terms of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, a railroad worker who is able to work, willing to work, and available for work, and still can't find a job, can draw unemployment insurance benefits, provided that he has earned a certain amount of money in railroad employment in the calendar year preceding the last July 1st. These benefits are financed by contributions collected by the Railroad Retirement Board from railroad employers—employees do not contribute.

employment service

The primary purpose of the Board's employment service is to supplement the unemployment insurance system. In other words, its main function is to help unemployed railroad workers find jobs so that they no longer need to draw unemployment insurance benefits. In periods when the labor demand exceeds the labor supply, however, and claims for unemployment become few and far between, the employment service becomes important as a recruitment agency, charged with keeping the railroads supplied with the workers they need. Since the employment service is a part of the unemployment insurance system, expenses in connection with it are paid from the contributions collected from employers.

where are you?

To pay old-age, disability, survivors' and unemployment insurance benefits and to conduct an employment service are the functions of the Railroad Retirement Board. The old-age, disability, and survivors' benefits are administered chiefly by that part of the Board known as the bureau of retirement claims. Responsibility for the employment service and the payment of unemployment insurance benefits rests with the bureau of employment and claims. Obviously, however, the fulfillment of these main functions necessitates many other functions, such as keeping track of service months and earnings of railroad employees, recruiting and managing Board personnel, procuring space, maintaining equipment, filing, and so on. The various parts of the Board organization, all of which are necessary to the fulfillment of the main objectives, are named in the chart on page 35. Can you find your spot?

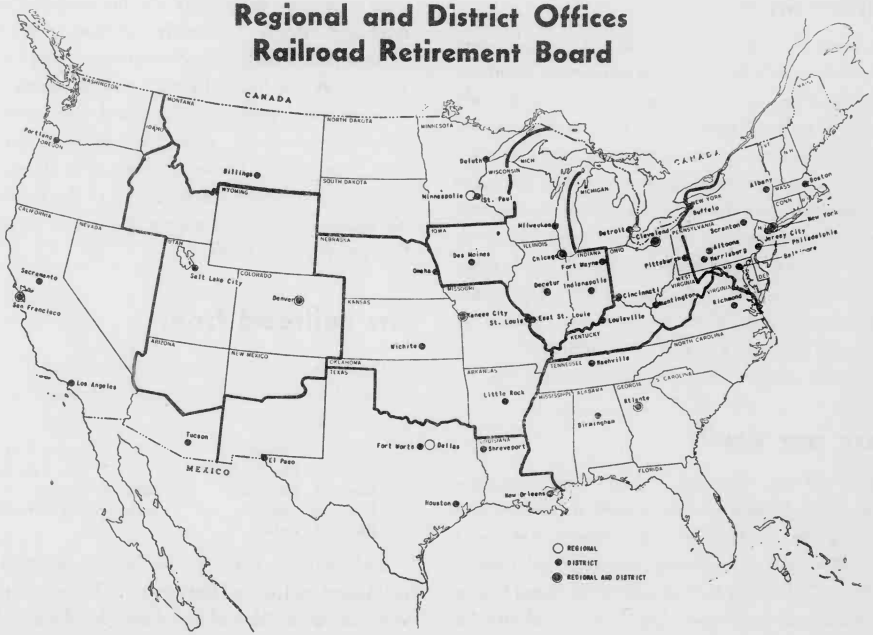
the railroad front

The Board has nine regional offices, located in widely-scattered cities of great railroad employment, and numbered as follows:

Region 1. Atlanta.
Region 2. New York.
Region 3. Cleveland.
Region 4. Chicago.
Region 5. Dallas.
Region 6. Kansas City.
Region 7. Minneapolis.
Region 8. Denver.
Region 9. San Francisco.

Each regional office has under its jurisdiction district and branch offices and base points. The map on page 8 will give you an idea of how thoroughly the Board covers "the railroad front."

Regional and District Offices
Railroad Retirement Board



part 2 · strictly personal

your appointment

Civil-service appointments are of various types, and it is personnel practice to refer to employees in terms of their appointments. Thus, if you hear someone calling you an "indefinite employee," it is no reflection on your mental processes. The term serves simply to identify your appointment. It will be well for you to take another look at the Form G–105, Advice of Personnel Action, which you received when you reported for work; it will show in which of the following categories you fit:

Probational employee: One who has received a probationary appointment and has not completed his probationary period (usually the first six months of service);

Permanent employee: One who has completed his probationary period and has been appointed without any limitations as to length of service;

Temporary employee: One who has received a temporary appointment for a specified period, as when there is work of a temporary character to be completed, after which his services may not be required; he may, however, receive an extension of his temporary appointment;

Probational indefinite employee: One who has received an indefinite appointment for a period in excess of six months but whose appointment may be terminated when the circumstances which made it necessary cease to exist;

War service employee: One who was appointed for (1) the duration of the war and 6 months thereafter; or (2) for less than 1 year during the emergency period. Employees appointed after March 16, 1942, and before the end of the emergency all fall within this category.

your classification

Civil-service positions are classified on the basis of the difficulty and responsibility and nature of the work in-

volved. The classification symbol is made up of letters, which indicate the type of service, and a number, which indicates the grade (i.e., importance, difficulty, responsibility and value) of the job. Grades are numerical, with "1" the lowest. The service symbols are as follows:

P—Professional or scientific.
SP—Subprofessional.
CAF—Clerical, administrative, and fiscal.
CPC —Craft, protective, and custodial.

Form G-105 will tell you in which group your job belongs.

your efficiency rating

At least once every year you receive an "efficiency rating" from your supervisor (unless you have received a promotion less than 90 days prior to the date on which ratings are scheduled); his supervisor reviews the rating and decides whether or not it is a fair one. Then the efficiency rating committee of the Board as a whole reviews all the ratings to determine whether or not uniform standards have been used. After all these steps have been taken, you will receive written notice of your rating. Printed on the notice is an outline of the procedure for you to follow if you consider the rating unfair and you wish to protest it. If you do file an appeal, it will be heard by a Board of Review composed of three members: a chairman, appointed by the Civil Service Commission, a member appointed by the Board, and a member elected by the employees of the Board. The list

of ratings used is shown at the bottom of the rating form. You can probably find, in Administrative Order G. O.-8, the answers to any questions which occur to you on the subject of efficiency ratings. Part 4 of this booklet will tell you where to find a copy of that order.

your raises and promotions

Virtue is its own reward, of course. But in Government service virtue pays a bonus, besides, in the form of pay raises. If your salary is less than $3,800 a year,

and if you have had no promotion or administrative salary increase for 18 months, you will automatically receive a one-step salary increase, provided your most recent efficiency rating was at least "good" and your service and conduct have been in all respects satisfactory. (The classification chart shows you what "one step" amounts to at your salary.) As you advance within your grade, these increases are harder to come by. That is, after you have reached the middle step in your grade, your efficiency rating must be "Very good" or "Excellent" in order for you to merit a salary increase after 18 months. Also, when you begin to earn $3,800 a year or more, it's a long time between increases for satisfactory service—2½ years, in fact.

There is another type of "reward of virtue" which can come your way. The Board is authorized to grant, at its carefully exercised discretion, a single-step salary advancement called a "meritorious increase" as a reward for particularly outstanding service. Any such recommendation, after approval by the Board, must be reported to the Civil Service Commission and thence to Congress. Consequently you have to be really "outstanding" in order to get one. There's nothing like hitching your wagon to a star, though, so here are some examples of the kind of achievement that might result in a meritorious increase:

classification salary rates

Ranking designation	Service and grade				Minimum	Maximum	Increment (salary step)
	CPC	SP	CAF	P			
C	2				$1,200	$1,500	
D	3				1,320	1,620	
E			1		1,260	1,620	
F	4				1,500	1,860	
G		3	2		1,440	1,800	$60
H	5				1,680	2,040	
J		4	3		1,620	1,980	
K	6				1,860	2,220	
L		5	4		1,800	2,160	
N		6	5	1	2,000	2,600	
O		7	6		2,300	2,900	
P		8	7	2	2,600	3,200	100
Q			8		2,900	3,500	
R			9	3	3,200	3,800	
S			10		3,500	4,100	
T			11	4	3,800	4,600	
U			12	5	4,600	5,400	200
V			13	6	5,600	6,400	
W			14	7	6,500	7,500	250
X			15	8	8,000	9,000	

(a) Setting a new high in amount and standard of assigned work accomplished;

(b) Devising time-saving work methods, improved training methods, and more effective procedure;

(c) Achieving distinction for substantially improving the morale of a large group of workers;

(d) Any other sustained achievement related to your work that is in the public interest and is service beyond and above the call of duty.

Promotions are also in the nature of rewards for work well done. The Board is proud of its "promotion from within" policy, which means that Board employees get first chance at any vacancy. With certain exceptions,[1] whenever there is a position open which cannot be filled by someone already in the same budget unit, (an organization unit which has a separate appropriation) it is posted on the bulletin boards, and any Board employee may apply for it. Vacancies are filled by persons from outside the Board only when their qualifications are more specifically suited to the requirements of the job. Thus, a "nutshell" formula for advancement at the Board might be "work hard, learn all you can, . . . and keep an eye on the bulletin boards."

[1] The bureau of employment and claims (see Part 3) maintains one eligible register of all headquarters employees who signify a wish to go into the field and another of field employees interested in certain jobs at headquarters; many vacancies in that bureau are filled on the basis of these registers without recourse to advertising the vacancies.

your retirement

When you receive your pay check you will find that a 5 percent deduction has been made for your retirement pension.

Your retirement benefit will equal your contribution plus interest, plus a contribution by the Government, the size of which depends on the length of your service.

salary table

Annual base pay	Semimonthly pay period			
	Base pay	Overtime pay 48-hour week	Retirement deduction	Net
$1,200	$50.00	$12.50	$2.50	$60.00
$1,260	52.50	12.50	2.63	62.37
$1,320	55.00	12.50	2.75	64.75
$1,380	57.50	12.50	2.88	67.12
$1,440	60.00	13.00	3.00	70.00
$1,500	62.50	13.54	3.13	72.91
$1,560	65.00	14.08	3.25	75.83
$1,620	67.50	14.62	3.38	78.74
$1,680	70.00	15.16	3.50	81.66
$1,740	72.50	15.70	3.63	84.57
$1,800	75.00	16.25	3.75	87.50
$1,860	77.50	16.79	3.88	90.41
$1,920	80.00	17.33	4.00	93.33
$1,980	82.50	17.87	4.13	96.24
$2,000	83.33	18.05	4.17	97.21
$2,040	85.00	18.41	4.25	99.16
$2,100	87.50	18.95	4.38	102.07
$2,160	90.00	19.50	4.50	105.00
$2,200	91.66	19.86	4.59	106.93
$2,220	92.50	20.04	4.63	107.91
$2,300	95.83	20.76	4.80	111.79
$2,400	100.00	21.66	5.00	116.66
$2,500	104.16	22.57	5.21	121.52
$2,600	108.33	23.47	5.42	126.38
$2,700	112.50	24.37	5.63	131.24
$2,800	116.66	25.28	5.84	136.10
$2,900	120.83	26.18	6.05	140.96
$3,000	125.00	26.18	6.25	144.93
$3,100	129.16	26.18	6.46	148.88
$3,200	133.33	26.18	6.67	152.84
$3,300	137.50	26.18	6.88	156.80
$3,400	141.66	26.18	7.09	160.75
$3,500	145.83	26.18	7.30	164.71
$3,600	150.00	26.18	7.50	168.68
$3,700	154.16	26.18	7.71	172.63
$3,800	158.33	26.18	7.92	176.59
$3,900	162.50	26.18	8.13	180.55
$4,000	166.66	26.18	8.34	184.50
$4,100	170.83	26.18	8.55	188.46
$4,200	175.00	26.18	8.75	192.43
$4,400	183.33	26.18	9.17	200.34
$4,600	191.66	26.18	9.59	208.25
$4,800	200.00	26.18	10.00	216.18
$5,000	208.33	26.18	10.42	224.09

This whole subject of civil-service retirement has lots of angles. Practically all of them are covered in a booklet (mentioned in Part 4) entitled "Your Retirement System," published by the Civil Service Commission. You may find it interesting reading.

your hours

Your supervisor will furnish you with details about your hours. Pay particular attention to the time you are expected to report for duty because consistent tardiness can lead to all sorts of unpleasantness. You are expected to report back promptly following your lunch period, too, and if your supervisor tells you that you are permitted a 10-minute rest period morning and afternoon, he really means 10 minutes.

Although the regular work week consists of a prescribed number of hours, don't develop a martyr complex if you are occasionally called upon to work more than the prescribed number. You won't be asked to unless the pressure of work makes overtime absolutely necessary. If consistent overtime cannot be avoided you will be reimbursed for it, probably by "compensatory" or "overtime" leave. You'll find out about other kinds of leave by reading the next subsection.

your privileges

leave

Time off, to Government employees, is "leave." Literally volumes have been written on this subject, but Administrative Order G. O.–10 gives you an adequate digest of all the current material. You can find all the details there. For now, it will be enough for you to know that as a civil service employee you are entitled, under certain circumstances, to various types of officially approved absences.

Sick leave

The phrase "saving time" has a literal meaning in civil service circles. Each month that you work you earn 10 hours of sick leave, which you save up, month by month, until you need it . . . that is, until illness, injury or exposure to contagious disease makes it advisable for you to stay away from work . . . or when you need to take time off for medical, dental, or optical treatment. In school, you remember, you used to "bring a note from your mother." Here, if you take time off for treatment, or if illness keeps you from the office for more than 3 days on sick leave, you must bring a note from your

doctor. The easiest way is to have the doctor sign your leave slip in the place indicated. The "ceiling" on the amount of sick leave you can accumulate is 90 days. Incidentally, you are expected to inform your supervisor as soon as the office opens if you find that you cannot

come to work. Similarly, your leave slip should be filled out promptly upon your return to duty. The minimum amount of sick leave chargeable to you is 1 hour, and beyond that it is charged in multiples of 1 hour.

Annual leave

When your mother-in-law comes to town and you want to take her sightseeing . . . or when you are seized with the desire to spend some time shopping for a new hat . . . or when you just want a vacation . . . find out from your supervisor whether you can conveniently be spared from the office during the time in question. If it appears that you can be, fill out a request for annual leave in whatever amount (in multiples of an hour) you will need. If you are a permanent employee, your annual leave accrues at the rate of two days a month, except that at the end of each quarter you hit the jack pot in the form of an extra half-day. In other words you can accumulate 26 days a year. Whether or not you can actually take that many days in any year depends on the work in your department, the national manpower situation and some other factors. (During the war period, the Board's policy has been to limit the amount of annual leave granted to any one employee for vacation purposes to 12 calendar days.) Eventually, though, you will get either time off or compensation for all your accumulated annual leave up to 90 days. If you are a temporary employee, you earn 2½ days' leave every month, (provided the month of service is unbroken by a period of leave without pay) which is credited to you at the end of the month.

In very special circumstances, if your supply of leave is exhausted and yet it is essential for you to have time

off, your supervisor may be able to arrange advance leave or leave without pay. Let's hope you won't need either kind, but if you do, consult your supervisor.

military leave

If, while you are an employee of the Board, you enter the armed forces, the Board will keep your job open for you until your return. Although your Board salary will not be paid during your military service (except, if you wish, to the extent that you have accrued annual leave), your name will not be removed from the pay roll. Instead you will be carried on military leave without pay. Of course if you were a temporary employee, this does not apply. But if you were a war service appointee the job you had when you left will be held for you until six months after the war, provided you fulfill the conditions numbered (1), (2) and (3) below. You remember, of course, that the job you had as a war service appointee was guaranteed only for "the duration and 6 months," and that is the status you will resume upon your return. If, however, you were a permanent employee, then you resume your permanent status when you return provided that (1) you are still capable of performing the work; (2) you apply for your old position wthin the time prescribed by law, following your discharge from the service; and (3) you present a certificate of satisfactory military or naval services. If your old job is no longer in existence, every effort will be made to find one for you of the same grade and pay. The sick leave you had accumulated before you left will still be waiting for you, and so will your annual leave unless you chose to take cash for it instead when you were leaving. Part of your service in the armed forces will be credited toward your retirement, and any periodic salary increase to which you would have been entitled had you stayed at the Board will become effective when you resume your job. You may even find that you have received a civil service promotion in grade while you were serving your country.

If your entrance into the armed forces is still simply a future possibility, keep your supervisor and the personnel director informed of your selective service status. The personnel office can supply you with a mimeographed form for submitting the information.

court leave

If you are ever subpoenaed to attend court as a witness for the Federal Government, you will be granted this special leave with pay, but you won't be allowed to

accept witness fees. If you're a witness other than for the Federal Government, you may accept fees and expense money, but you'll have to charge the time to your annual leave. If you are called as a witness by a State court, the procedure is more complicated: the time is charged as court, rather than annual, leave; you accept the check for fees; but—and here's the catch—you must promptly endorse the check to the Treasurer of the United States and turn it over to the personnel director. Of course, if there are travelling expenses involved in any of these cases, you may accept the amount of your expense money. Oh, and be sure to get a statement from the clerk of court certifying to the amount of time you spent as juror, witness, or what have you.

employees' compensation

The Government provides medical, surgical, and hospital treatment and compensation to an employee injured in line of duty, provided that the injury is reported to the personnel director as soon as it occurs and that an application for compensation is submitted to the Employee's Compensation Commission within a year after the accident. Total disability will bring you a minimum benefit of $58.33 a month. The maximum is $116.66 or two-thirds of your salary, whichever is less. Benefits based on partial disability are fixed by the Compensation Commission. If you have annual or sick leave to your credit, you may, with the Board's approval, use up your leave first and have your compensation start on the fourth day of disability after your leave has expired.

If an employee should be killed on duty, the expenses of his funeral would be borne by the Government and his dependents would receive certain monetary benefits.

But it's much more profitable to stay alive and well and draw your salary . . . so ***be careful!***

grievance adjustments

There is no reason for any Board employee ever to brood over real or fancied wrongs. Just get the grievances out in the open, give them a good airing, and, nine times out of ten, they'll disappear completely. Start with your immediate supervisor. Tell him what is troubling you and he'll do his best to straighten it out for you. If he doesn't succeed to your satisfaction, discuss it with his supervisor, and so on up the line until you come to the head of the bureau or office in which you are employed. If the difficulty still isn't ironed out, sit down and write a memorandum to the Secretary of the Board, carefully

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outlining your grievances and the steps you have followed in attempting to reach a satisfactory settlement. The Secretary will present your appeal at the next scheduled meeting of the Board, the Board will take it under advisement, and the Board's decision in the matter will be final. If you think that someone else can present your case more effectively, you are at liberty to authorize a representative to handle it for you at any stage.

Of course, if your grievance is in connection with the efficiency rating you received, you must handle it in accordance with the procedure printed on your rating form.

group hospitalization

If you work for the Board in Chicago, the girl at the information desk in the personnel office will be glad to give you complete details about The Plan for Hospital Care, a privately operated organization which, upon payment of nominal dues, provides hospital benefits for its members. New members are admitted only twice a year, so you'd better inquire about it at once, if you're interested. Otherwise you may just miss the final date and have to wait 6 months to join. If you are employed in a city other than Chicago, ask your supervisor about the local hospitalization systems.

credit union

At some time or other in his working life, almost anyone is apt to be faced with the necessity of borrowing money. A Board employee of the headquarters office with a sound reason for needing some extra cash need not resort to loan sharks. He may (by purchasing one share at $5) join the Federal Credit Union, a sort of "baby bank" where he may either deposit his money at interest or borrow money on very lenient terms. Deposits are accepted in sums as low as 25 cents. Loans are made at an interest rate of 1 percent per month, and that interest is charged only on the unpaid balance of the loan. The Credit Union is open on ordinary days from 12:30 to 4:30 and on pay day from 10:30 to 4:30. Loan applications submitted any time up to Wednesday noon will be acted upon when the credit committee meets on Wednesday afternoon. All Board employees, regardless of grade or position, are invited to join the credit union and take advantage of its facilities.

employee unions

Two national unions of Government employees have branches at the Railroad Retirement Board. They are the American Federation of Government Employees,

affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and the United Federal Workers of America, affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Both unions seek to improve working conditions and increase opportunities for advancement among Government employees. The union objectives include a more liberal retirement system, a civil service court of appeals, an improved system of efficiency ratings, and an ever-improving personnel policy program. In addition, the unions provide educational, recreational, and entertainment programs and other services for their members. A grievance adjustment service is provided employees through the local and national offices of the unions. Union periodicals keep members advised of new and pending legislation, activities of the unions, and other pertinent information. Any Board employee is free to join any union of his choice. His joining or not joining will not be the cause of any discrimination against him.

labor-management committee

You've seen a man at the caboose end of a train vigorously swinging his signal lantern and thereby exerting a profound influence on the action of the locomotive. Presumably, if you have just come to work for the Board, you are still fairly close to the "far end" of the organization. But, like the man with the lantern, you can nevertheless take part in directing proceedings. The Labor-Management Committee, formed in July 1944, is the medium through which you may transmit your "signals" to the engineer. The committee is made up of four members appointed by the Board: two of them are chosen from among the executives, and one is designated by the membership of Lodge 375 of the American Federation of Government Employees, one by Local 13, United Federal Workers of America. Here are the committee's functions, as outlined by the Board itself:

The committee, through its secretary, shall, when the plan therefore shall have been approved by the Board, receive and consider suggestions when submitted in

writing from any officer or employee of the Board and shall recommend any measures it may deem appropriate for the purpose of improving the operations of the Board and the efficiency and morale of its employees.

The committee shall study methods calculated to encourage officers and employees to offer suggestions, and procedures for the appropriate consideration of such suggestions and shall recommend to the Board a plan for receiving and considering suggestions.

The committee may, at its option, participate in the formulation and review of all policies and practices affecting personnel such as the posting of vacant positions, reduction-in-force procedure, uniform efficiency rating procedure, training course plans, promotions from within policy, placement of employees returning from armed services and may make recommendations to the Board with respect to such matters.

The committee shall serve as a standing committee to outline and direct programs for war loan drives, blood donations, Red Cross war funds, Community Chest drives, and any national program designed to further the war effort in which the Board is called upon to participate.

The committee shall perform such other functions as the Board may from time to time delegate to it.

The committee shall not receive or hear complaints of an employee, or employees, claiming to be aggrieved by action of an officer or fellow employee. Such complaints shall be disposed of in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Rules of the Board.

We hope you'll look upon the labor-management committee as your committee and that you will submit suggestions to it often.

your restrictions

no politics

You'll hear a lot in Government service about something called "The Hatch Act." It's an act of Congress which prohibits you, as a civil-service employee, from taking any active part in politics. You retain your right to vote, of course, but you musn't make speeches on political subjects. Your political opinions, if any, must be expressed privately or not at all.

It's all right, of course, to "write your Congressman," in the good old American tradition, but don't ask your Congressman or anyone else to write to the Board in your behalf in the matter of raises or promotions. In the first

place, raises and promotions here are based solely on merit. In the second place, the Civil Service Commission can be exceedingly severe about the solicitation of outside recommendations. Its rules even go so far as to state that such recommendations "if made with the knowledge and consent of the employee, shall be sufficient cause for debarring him from the promotion proposed, and a repetition of the offense shall be sufficient cause for removing him from the service."

For a detailed account of what you may and may not do, see "Political Activity and Political Assessments," compiled by the Civil Service Commission.

no gifts or contributions

Except in the case of worthy charities approved by the Board, steer clear of making or seeking contributions or gifts to or from fellow employees. And there's a law about supervisors. Here's the legal language: "No employee shall solicit contributions nor make any donation for a present to an official supervisor; nor shall any such superior accept any present from any employee or employees receiving a smaller salary than himself." There is also a rule about your contact with people outside the Board, to wit: No employee of the Railroad Retirement Board shall accept gifts, gratuities, entertainment, or favors from any person or organization in a position to derive benefits from any official action of the employee.

no gambling

This means that check pools, betting, punchboards, and all their like are OUT.

no breach of confidence

No matter how engaging an anecdote you might be able to weave around a juicy bit of information you have picked up in the course of an office day, remember that the anecdote might glitter, but silence is golden. Don't discuss official business outside the office, and remember that all confidential information must be ***kept*** confidential, even from fellow-employees unless they need to know it in connection with their work.

Civil service is a fiscal fish bowl in which everyone knows . . . or can easily find out . . . how much money everyone else is making. But that is about the only kind of business information you could have about a fellow employee which could not be construed as confidential. The safest rule to follow is: "When in doubt, keep still."

no welshing on debts

At first glance, government employees seem to have an advantage over other workers in that govenment salaries cannot be garnisheed. Lest you plan to abuse that privilege, however (and of course you have no such plan) you had better be forewarned about it. Suffice it to say that if an employee's neglect of his just debts results in embarrassment to the Board, disciplinary action may be taken with respect to the employee.

special services

the health room

At the headquarters office of the Board a nurse is on duty during office hours every work day. If you receive an injury, no matter how slight, or if for any reason you do not feel well, do not hesitate to go at once to the health room. If you are too ill or too severely injured to do so, have someone call the nurse for you. She will render emergency aid, and if that is insufficient she will arrange to have you treated at a government dispensary.

The nurse cannot give you repeated treatments for a chronic ailment nor can she prescribe or dispense medicine except in emergencies. She can help to make you more

comfortable, however, and she may decide to send you home or to put you to bed in the health room dormitory for a while. If you need the attention of a doctor, dentist, or oculist, the nurse will recommend one if you ask her to, or you can obtain a list of reputable practitioners by calling the American Dental Association, Whitehall 4462, or the American Medical Association, Whitehall 0880.

the library

The pleasant room occupying the center of the eighth floor at 844 Rush Street is the Board's library. There you can find all the sources of information mentioned in Part 4 of this booklet, and many more besides. Friendly, courteous attendants will help you find any research

material you need, from magazines to legislative indexes. The library is well stocked with lawbooks, Congressional Records, Federal Registers, treatises, pamphlets, bulletins, and just plain books—all having some connection, direct or otherwise, with (1) social insurance here or abroad; (2) personnel administration and management; (3) office procedures; or (4) legislation, pending or approved, affecting the work of the Board in any way at all. You can't take any of the material out of the building (unless, of course, you work in a field office where library service is by mail), but you are at liberty to use any of the publications either at your desk or in the library. Ordinarily, books will be charged out to you for a period of 10 days.

the bulletin boards

There are two bulletin boards in the lobby on each floor used by the headquarters offices. One is for official business (such things as those notices of vacancies you read about in Part 2) and one for general notices (lost and found, rooms to rent, employees' activities, etc.). The office of supply and service has charge of the actual posting of notices, so if you have an announcement you want to give to the world, send or take it to the office of the chief of supply and service. Make nine copies of the notice, and, if time is an element to be considered, see that the notice reaches the office of supply and service at least a day before you want it posted.

Notices of forthcoming civil-service examinations and of openings in government service elsewhere than with the Board are posted on a bulletin board in the office of director of personnel at headquarters and at convenient points in the regional and field offices.

the employee counsellor

If you have a problem that isn't a grievance, that doesn't concern your efficiency rating, that doesn't seem to fit into the functions of the Labor-Management Committee and that you prefer not to discuss with your supervisor, take it to the employee counsellor in the personnel office. Even if it's as personal a matter as how to balance your budget, or where to find a place to live, if you want help in solving it, that's the place to go. After all, you'll do better work if you aren't harassed by personal difficulties, so it's to the Board's advantage to solve as many of them as possible for you.

the recreational association

All Board employees are eligible for membership in the recreational association, an organization almost as

old as the Board itself. If you like to play golf, tennis, baseball, or softball . . . if you like to hike, bowl, dance, bicycle, or demonstrate your dramatic talents . . . if you like to go to dances, picnics, beach parties, or radio broadcasts . . . join the recreational association. There are economic advantages to being a member, too. Several Chicago stores extend discount privileges to recreational association members, and theater tickets are frequently available at reduced prices through the association. The friendly little publication called "All-A-Board," which keeps you informed of what's happening to people on other floors, and in the regions, is also a product of the association.

American Legion

Post No. 856 of the American Legion is the only post in Illinois the members of which are all employed by one agency. It has another distinction, too—one of its charter members is a woman. If you have been honorably discharged from the armed forces, you are eligible for membership.

lunches

If you are a headquarters employee who insists on eating your own cooking . . . or your wife's . . . and so would rather carry your lunch than eat in any of the numerous Near North Side restaurants . . . a room has been provided for your convenience at the north end of the first floor lobby. It contains tables, chairs, and machines for dispensing bottles of milk. There's a weighing machine, too, so you can watch that waistline.

women's lounge

There's a bright, attractively furnished room on the twelfth floor at 844 Rush Street where the feminine fraction of the Board can gather to smoke and chat during rest periods, or to eat their home-made lunches in completely feminine privacy.

war work

war bonds

Buying bonds is a practically painless procedure under the pay-roll deduction plan. Just let the "minute man" in your office know what amount you want to invest each pay day and what denomination of bond you want. The deductions will be made automatically and your bonds will be delivered to you regularly.

Whenever you can manage to buy an extra bond, for

cash, in addition to those you buy on the pay-roll plan, make the purchase at the office of the credit union. You can get your pay check cashed there, too, provided you buy a bond at the same time. If you're a field employee, your minute man will handle the purchase for you.

Red Cross blood bank

Free rides and free leave are among the privileges that accrue to depositors in this bank. That is, whenever you donate your blood to the Red Cross supply of plasma, the time that you are absent from the office for that purpose will not be charged against your accumulated leave. Furthermore, you will be taken to the blood donor station and back again in a Board car.

first aid classes

If you've always wanted to be that masterful person who takes charge of the situation when somebody faints on a street car or when there is an automobile accident—here's your chance: The Red Cross and the Office of Civilian Defense join forces to bring the principles of first aid to Board employees. There are advanced as well as elementary courses available. Ask the girl at the information desk in the personnel office.

miscellany

manners

Even people who know Emily Post by heart are sometimes guilty of carelessness about their office telephone manners. Answer every call as eagerly and pleasantly

as though you expected it to turn out to be a dinner invitation. Identify your unit immediately; that is, don't just say "Hello," . . . say "Mr. So and So's Office" . . . or "General Files" or even "Extension 000." Keep a pad and pencil handy for necessary notations. Furnish the requested information quickly and briefly, or else transfer the call to someone who can do so. To transfer outside calls, signal the operator slowly and definitely.

Be sure the conversation is completed before you replace the receiver, and when you do replace it be firm and gentle. Incidentally, don't labor under the misapprehension that the person at the other end of the line can't hear your "asides," just because you cover the mouth piece with your hands; the entire telephone instrument is sensitive to sound, so watch your language!

milestones in your life

It's your duty to keep the director of personnel informed about the things that happen to you. Let him know (through your supervisor) when you get married, or have a new baby, or move to a different address, or change your phone number. Tell him what new courses you have completed or what new degrees you have received. One of the items of information you gave him when you came to work here was the name of the person who should be notified in case of emergency. If that person's address changes, or if you want to substitute a different name, have the records changed immediately. Also, if you change your location in the Board, notify the telephone operator of your new extension number.

conservation

"Waste not, want not" is as true in Government service as elsewhere. Even such lowly articles as paper clips and rubber bands assume great importance when you suddenly find that you are out of them and no more are available. Paper, pencils, typewriters . . . lots of things are hard to get these days. Use your office supplies wisely and carefully that their days may be long in the land.

lost and found

If you find property, personal or official, which appears to have been lost, turn it in at once to the office of supply and service. Leave your name there, too, and if the property remains unclaimed for 30 days . . . finders keepers!

notaries public

If you must have something notarized, and you haven't time to go to a bank or elsewhere to have it done, the girl at the information desk in the personnel office will direct you to a Board employee authorized to administer oaths.

passes

In order to enter the building at 844 Rush Street more than an hour before or after regular working hours, you

must present a building pass. If your work requires you to be here at odd hours, your supervisor will procure a pass for you. Even though you have a pass, however, you should sign the register on the guard's desk in the lobby when you enter and leave the building at irregular hours.

personal mail and phone calls

There is an all-inclusive rule about personal mail at the Railroad Retirement Board, to wit: it should not be written, dispatched, or received at the office. The first is prohibited because the taxpayers aren't paying you a salary for writing letters to your friends; the second because the Board has to pay postage on every so-called "penalty" envelope, whether or not stamps are affixed to it; and the third, because the mail room has enough trouble handling official mail without conducting a personal delivery service for you, besides.

Outgoing calls may be made from the several pay telephones around the building. Incoming personal calls should be discouraged. Try to persuade your friends to call you at home, except in emergencies. When you do get personal calls, make the conversation brief and to the point.

part 3 · strictly business

In Part I of this booklet you were given a bird's-eye view of the Railroad Retirement Board. Presumably you will soon know all there is to know about the kind of functions performed by your own unit. The "once over lightly" list below will give you some idea of what goes on elsewhere in the Board.

functions reserved to Board members

To see that the functions of the Board as a whole are properly performed and the acts properly administered;

To determine personnel policies;

To determine the organizational structure of the Board;

To study and approve or amend such things as the budget, requests for appropriations, rules and regulations, agreements, and leases;

To consider and comment on legislation which in any way would affect the Board, and to recommend legislation, as necessary, for the improvement of the administration of the Board's functions;

To appear before congressional committees whenever necessary or expedient;

To serve as a court of appeal for Board employees in the matter of grievances;

To serve as a court of appeal for railroad employers and employees who disagree with findings made by the general counsel or the appeals coun_il concerning them.

duties of the secretary

To manage all the administrative details involved in the processes of having Board meetings, of recording Board actions and decisions, and of keeping the Board organization as a whole informed regarding Board policies;

To write letters reflecting the opinions and policies of the Board members;

To review cases on appeal to the Board and to present the facts to the Board in convenient form;

To have charge of the distribution of Board publications;
To supervise the librarian's operation of the library.

duties of the librarian

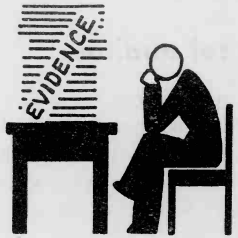
To maintain and operate a library of books, periodicals, and data of interest to employees of the Board in connection with their work.

actuarial advisory committee

This committee consists of three experts in the actuarial field who act simply as consultants to the Board. Just as private insurance companies employ actuaries, so does the Board, as administrator of a public insurance system, require actuarial advice, and the Railroad Retirement Act specifically provides for the establishment of the Actuarial Advisory Committee.

the general counsel

As the title implies, the general counsel and his staff of attorneys handle for the Board all matters involving legal questions. They issue opinions, for instance, as to whether the employees of such and such a company come under the jurisdiction of our Acts and are therefore entitled to the benefits we have to offer. Or they decide, on the basis of evidence submitted, that such and such a steamship company, by virtue of some of its activities, is actually engaged in the railroad industry. Or they investigate the rules and practices in effect on a certain road at a certain time, with the result that Mr. John D. Applicant is found to be entitled to an annuity, even though he was on furlough at that time. Sometimes they decide whether a man who is drawing an annuity can go to work at a particular job without having his annuity payments suspended. Sometimes we maintain that a company comes under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Retirement Acts and the company



still insists that it does not; then it's up to the general counsel and his staff to conduct hearings, take new evidence, and so on. There are always new legal problems for the attorneys to solve and rarely is there a dull moment in the solving.

the general auditor

He acts as an inspector as well as an auditor . . . an investigator who checks up to see that the Board's records and accounts are properly kept and are in balance, and who conducts special investigations and studies of Board functions whenever the Board directs him to.

the Washington representative

When wartime overcrowding made it advisable for the Board to move from Washington to Chicago, it became necessary to leave somebody in the Nation's capital to take care of various matters which could best be handled on the spot. The Washington representative is that somebody. He maintains the necessary personal contacts for us with other Government agencies. The Social Security Board, the War Manpower Commission, the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget are among the agencies with which we frequently have dealings.

director of research

The actuaries, economists and statisticians on the staff of the director of research obtain data and make estimates of what the future payments will be under the various provisions of the Acts. Many bills are introduced in Congress each session proposing benefits under the acts, and the Board is asked to comment on these. These comments usually are estimates of the added cost of the benefits which the bill proposes and such estimates are furnished by the office of the director of research from its statistics and studies. It is also the responsibility of this office to estimate what amounts will be received in taxes from employees and employers as a basis for the appropriation to be made by Congress to the retirement fund, and also what appropriations should be made to the retirement fund on account of credits accruing to railroad men who are in military service.

Included in the office of director of research are writers and editors who prepare the Monthly Review and Annual Report. (See Part 4 for more about these publications.)

the executive officer

His sizeable job is to supervise everything that is done in the so-called "operations branch" of the Board—that is, every function that has a direct bearing on paying a claim under the Railroad Retirement or Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act or on recruiting a worker for the railroad industry. All the bureaus and offices mentioned in this section from here on are under his general supervision.

office of liaison activities

As its name implies, this office acts as a liaison, or "go between," between the Board and railroad employers, and between the Board and railroad labor organizations. Under the direction of the chief liaison officer is a staff which must know all the answers, so that they can give accurate information to carriers or organizations who aren't quite clear as to what the Board's regulations require them to do; or to the employees, applicants, annuitants, and others, who drop in at the information office on the first floor of the headquarters building. They promote good-will, and they serve as trouble-shooters anywhere their services are needed in the field. Last, but not least, they keep the executive officer informed, through periodic reports, of the complaints, suggestions, criticisms, comments, and requests which come their way.

office of administrative planning and analysis

Under the direction of the chief administrative analyst, this office keeps tab on the Board as a whole with a view to preventing production bottlenecks and duplication of functions. It devises ways and means to get the Board's work done in the simplest, quickest, and most effective manner possible. Material affecting more than one bureau or office of the Board, such as administrative orders, is written in this office. Assigned to this office is a draftsman who designs all Board forms.

the appeals council

When a railroad worker applies for an annuity and his application is disapproved by the bureau of retirement claims, the worker can appeal his case—that is, he can ask that the evidence be reviewed by the appeals council. The five members of the council may find new

evidence or may place a different interpretation on the evidence already presented, and may, if they see fit, reverse the decision previously made by the bureau of retirement claims.

office of director of finance

As you can tell from its name, this is the office responsible for such important functions as seeing that your pay check is for the correct amount; that retirement benefit checks go out promptly to the correct addresses and in the correct amounts; that the Board budget is properly drawn up and that each bureau and office gets its share of the administrative expense money available to the Board; that we collect the contributions required under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act; and that all Board expenditures are legitimate and payable.

office of director of personnel

The Board pay roll is made up in this office; here the duties of each position are outlined and a classification is established for it; here your leave is computed and credited to you; here, too, originate the training programs which will help you become a more valuable employee of the Board. In short, all the things which concern you as an employee of the Board are handled directly or indirectly by this office.

office of supply and service

Such vitally necessary functions as buying equipment and supplies, maintaining files, providing stenographic services, handling incoming and outgoing mail, and running the well-equipped duplicating division, are lumped together under the general supervision of the chief of supply and service.

bureau of wage and service records

This bureau keeps track of all the service creditable toward retirement benefits performed by every railroad man in America since 1936 and of how much money each man received for that service. It furnishes such data when needed in connection with claims for benefits. It also assigns social-security account numbers, when necessary, to railroad workers and issues duplicate social-security account cards to railroad workers who have lost their old ones. Because its own duties require a great deal of

machine tabulating work, it maintains a complete machine tabulating section which is also used extensively by other Board bureaus and offices.

bureau of retirement claims

This is where applications for annuities and death benefits are examined and where the decision is made as to whether the person making the application fulfills all the requirements which would entitle him to a pension, annuity, or other benefit under the Railroad Retirement Acts. The people who examine the applications are called adjudicators; it is their responsibility to decide whether John D. Applicant is old enough to be entitled to an annuity, whether he has had enough railroad service to entitle him to one, how much annuity he should receive, and when the annuity should start. If Mr. Applicant states that he wants to retire because he is disabled, the adjudicator refers the case to the disability board, a group of physicians employed in the bureau of retirement claims, who determine on the basis of the medical evidence submitted whether Mr. Applicant's disabilities make it impossible for him to work steadily at anything. In death-benefit cases the adjudicator must also make sure that the person claiming the benefit is the person entitled to it under the law. In short, the bureau of retirement claims is like a court room, where cases are constantly being judged and the financial fate of applicants for benefits decided.

When the Board first came into existence, records of the compensation and service of the country's railroad men were scattered hither and yon among employers' pay-roll and personnel records. For the past several years, the bureau of retirement claims has been obtaining from the railroads the service and compensation records covering the period prior to January 1, 1937. These records, carefully compiled and filed, supplement those kept by the bureau of wage and service records, which deal with the period after December 31, 1936.

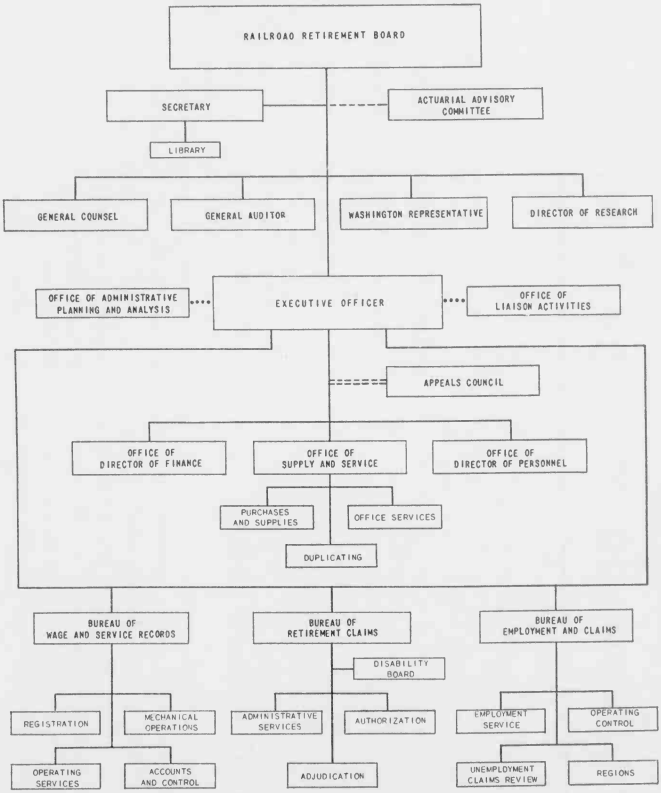
bureau of employment and claims

This bureau is responsible for maintaining, managing, and operating all the regional and district offices shown on the map in Part I of this booklet. Some of the employees of the bureau are in the departmental service and others are in the field service. The employees who are assigned to the headquarters office are in the depart-

mental service. The departmental service of the bureau is made up of the office of the director and the divisions of unemployment claims review, employment service, and operating control. The employees who are in the field service are under the jurisdiction of one of nine regional directors, who in turn are responsible to the director of employment and claims. These employees may be assigned to a regional, district or branch office or to a base point. Under the direction of the head of the bureau the field service offices receive claims for unemployment insurance and decide whether or not there are benefits payable. They also accept claims for benefits under the Retirement Acts, but such claims are sent to the headquarters office for further development and for approval or disapproval. One of the most colorful aspects of field work since the war began has been recruiting people to work on the railroads. Field representatives go on daily foraging expeditions, to ferret out folks who are unemployed, who have stopped working, or who have never worked, and to persuade them that they can benefit both themselves and the war effort by accepting railroad jobs.

The field offices represent the Board's most important contact with the public, since they are constantly the means of furnishing information to railroad employers, railroad workers, state unemployment compensation agencies, and other interested parties. They also conduct investigations into various matters when they are requested, by other bureaus or offices of the Board, to do so.

Organization Chart of the United States Railroad Retirement Board



- - - - - - Advisory Capacity Only

• • • • • • • • • Within the Office of the Executive Officer

= = = = = Administratively responsible to Executive Officer, otherwise operating as an independent unit

part 4 · where do you go from here?

Your appetite for knowledge about the Board has so far been only whetted . . . we hope. For further nourishment of that kind, you are invited to feast upon the sources of information discussed below. All of the materials mentioned are available in the library, but some of them may also be at hand in your own unit. Ask your supervisor. He will be glad to have you study them whenever you can spare the time from your work.

transcripts of Board orders

These are Board decisions on all sorts of topics, dating back to 1939. You won't want to read them from cover to cover, but remember them whenever you are seeking information on a specific subject concerning the Board as a whole. The transcripts are indexed by subject, on an annual basis, so finding what you want becomes a relatively simple matter. If you are seeking information about a Board action which occurred before 1939, the Secretary's office will help you find it.

administrative orders

There are two kinds of administrative orders, general orders and operating orders. The two types are more familiarly known as "G. O.'s" and "O. O.'s." The G. O.'s contain instructions, directions, or procedures which affect two or more offices outside the operations branch (that is, outside the jurisdiction of the executive officer), or at least one office or bureau within the operations branch and one other office. An "O. O.," as its name implies, affects only two or more bureaus or offices within the operations branch. Administrative orders cover a variety of subjects, from how administrative orders themselves are prepared and handled, to how official travel is authorized and paid for. It will pay you to glance through the table of contents of a set of

administrative orders (either your supervisor or the librarian can direct you to a set) and to read those which particularly interest you or which have a direct bearing on the work you do.

copies of the acts

It may interest you to read the official presentation of the laws you are helping to administer. Copies of the Railroad Retirement Acts of 1935 and 1937, the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, and the amendments which have from time to time been made to them, are all available for your perusal.

questions and answers on the Railroad Retirement Act

This little booklet anticipates practically every question which a railroad employee interested in retiring might reasonably be expected to ask. Many of the same questions will undoubtedly occur to you. Here is a quick and simple way to pick up a lot of clear and pertinent explanations of the workings of the Railroad Retirement system.

monthly review

The Monthly Review is the official monthly publication of the Railroad Retirement Board. It is an informal report of Board activities. Board decisions, legal rulings, and interpretations of laws, if they are of interest to groups of railroad employers or employees, are summarized. If major changes in Board organization or procedure take place, they are explained. And always there are included statistical and progress reports on retirement, unemployment insurance, and employment service operations. Make it a point to have a look at each new issue of this publication.

annual report

The Board is required by law to make an annual report to the President of the United States, and to submit the report to Congress. The report covers finances and operations generally and outlines new or pending legislation affecting the Board's administration of benefits. It is worth your careful study.

your retirement system

The somewhat complicated subject of civil-service retirement is here reduced to the simplest terms possible. Retirement is probably not an immediate concern to you, but you may find it interesting to know what you have to look forward to.

political activity and political assessments

Whenever you are seized with patriotic zeal to get out and do something about elections, better look at this pamphlet to check up on the limitations placed on the political activities of civil-service employees. Either the librarian or the director of personnel will show you a copy.

accessions list

The library publishes, at regular intervals, lists of the most interesting items it has added to its collection since the publication of the preceding list. All items listed thereon are available upon request. Submit your requests to the librarian through your supervisor.

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